

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 13, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader Schumer, and Leader McConnell:

Thank you for your ongoing work to address the nation's aging infrastructure. As negotiations on a comprehensive infrastructure package continue, we respectfully request your leadership in ensuring the inclusion of robust investments in infrastructure funding for hospitals and health systems. Our hospitals provide an essential public benefit and should be part of this historic opportunity to invest in the nation's critical infrastructure needs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for a resilient and modernized healthcare infrastructure—and the glaring infrastructure gaps caused by the persistent underfunding of and fiscal challenges faced by healthcare providers. Congress took important actions to help providers maintain healthcare access, protect patients, and curb the spread of the virus throughout the pandemic. But as we look forward toward recovery and prepare for the next pandemic, we must recognize that the COVID-19 response in New York in particular created fiscal devastation that has stalled healthcare infrastructure projects and placed other innovations on hold, many indefinitely.

Even before 2020 and the financial fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and response, New York's nonprofit and public hospitals and health systems as a group have disproportionately suffered from persistently weak financial conditions driven by low reimbursement levels across all payers. Low margins stifle opportunities to reinvest in buildings and modernization and reduce access to capital markets for affordable loans. Such dire financial conditions have resulted in a single key infrastructure metric: collectively, New York hospitals' physical plants are the oldest in the nation.

Despite these challenges, our hospitals and health systems are essential to New York's economy, generating \$176 billion in economic activity, creating nearly 864,000 jobs combined, and providing substantial community benefits and investments. Adhering to their charitable mission, New York's nonprofit, non-public hospitals expend \$12.3 billion, with the state's public hospitals contributing billions more each year to cover the cost of care provided to low-income,

elderly, and under-served communities, and continuously investing in community health initiatives. We cannot abandon these community anchors—the very hospitals and health systems that led us through the pandemic from the front lines.

Hospital and health system infrastructure investments must go beyond building modernization and physical improvements. They must also include key workforce, preparedness, and digital infrastructure. Substantial federal support for healthcare workforce programs—including graduate medical education and increasing the number of Medicare-reimbursed residency positions in the nation’s teaching hospitals— will ensure that providers can continue to serve their communities.

We look forward to working with you toward these goals. Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,



Kathleen M. Rice (NY-04)
Member of Congress

/s/ Gregory W. Meeks (NY-05)
Member of Congress

/s/ Thomas R. Suozzi (NY-03)
Member of Congress

/s/ Joseph D. Morelle (NY-25)
Member of Congress

/s/ Jerrold Nadler (NY-10)
Member of Congress

/s/ Adriano Espaillat (NY-13)
Member of Congress

/s/ Paul Tonko (NY-20)
Member of Congress

/s/ Mondaire Jones (NY-17)
Member of Congress

/s/ Carolyn B. Maloney (NY-12)
Member of Congress

/s/ Grace Meng (NY-06)
Member of Congress

/s/ Ritchie Torres (NY-15)
Member of Congress

/s/ Nydia M. Velázquez (NY-07)
Member of Congress

/s/ Brian Higgins (NY-26)
Member of Congress

/s/ Antonio Delgado (NY-19)
Member of Congress

/s/Jamaal Bowman (NY-16)
Member of Congress

/s/ Hakeem Jeffries (NY-08)
Member of Congress

/s/ Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (NY-14)
Member of Congress